

Introduction — Good evening, thank you for letting me speak tonight. My name is Matt Dunigan and I'm recently unemployed. I have a wife and two children, with a third on the way. To support this family, the jobs I'm applying for all require me to have a college degree.

Transition - The Connecticut Community College system gave me a way to obtain that degree at a cost that I could afford, and my story is not a unique one.

1 My story

A Attended UCONN when I first came to Connecticut in the early 90's

B Worked at Mohegan Sun for 14 yrs. and was laid off last September

C Found I really needed to continue my education in order to be successful in my search for a new job

Transition — This led me to Three Rivers Community College.

2 Chose TRCC to continue my education due to several positive factors they offer

A There was no assistance this time around — low tuition a must

B Flexible schedule due to family — need to be home to take care of my children during the day time

C Accelerated courses allows me to obtain my 2 yr. degree quickly and then return to the job hunt

Transition - Each one of my classes that I attend at TRCC has several people with a story just like mine.

3 Not an isolated story

A Unlike some of the Universities, the Community College system is filled with long term residents, with no intention of earning a degree and leaving Connecticut

B Over 2,000 students at TRCC alone are in the Continuing Education Program. These Residents, like my self are trying to use the Community College system to improve themselves, allowing them to fill a job opening, and pay taxes in this state

Conclusion - In conclusion, I ask you not to keep the system the way it is for my self, I will graduate this semester and go back to looking for a job, degree in hand. Continue to allow the Community College system to offer its services to the citizens like me who truly need it. Help us help you by allowing the Community College system to continue to offer quality low cost, high quality education for Connecticut citizens trying to make this a better state.

Thank you once again for your time.

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